



Adrian Chan

AI-first product and experience designer

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I'm a hands-on, AI-first product and experience designer. I bring years of digital transformation work, independently through Gravity7 and as a customer experience specialist at Deloitte Digital. My design theory centers on social interaction design (SxD).

PROFILE

I ran my own web agency, Gravity7, for nearly twenty years, building more than 50 websites and social experiences for retail, technology, publishing and startup companies, from Smith & Hawken, Reel.com, Sierra Designs and Yoga Journal to young social products. In the 2000s I helped define social interaction design: how people interact with each other through software. At Deloitte Digital (2012–2017) I helped build a client-facing customer experience team in the mobile-first years, when every company wanted its own iPhone app, iPad app and site redesign. Generative AI is the next transformation of that kind, and I have spent the past three years learning it by building with it: two AI-powered sites, designed and built to prove out product ideas of my own, and essays on what UX and interaction design bring to AI.

WHAT I BRING

- **Digital transformation, from the customer side.** Two decades of taking companies through a change in how they reach customers: web, social, mobile, and now AI. At Deloitte Digital I helped shape customer experience work and the go-to-market for digital transformation.
- **AI product and experience design.** What an AI product should do for the people using it, and how it presents what it knows: conversation, navigation, trust, and what the system shows of its reasoning.
- **Hands-on building with AI.** I designed and built Inquiring Lines and Sightlines with AI, from the idea to the running site: content pipelines, search, recommendations, editorial checks, admin consoles and engagement dashboards. I know firsthand what AI does well in a user experience and where it needs design.
- **Design theory for AI, with a focus on UX and social interaction design.** It matters more as personal agents become products. Essays on personas, interestingness, knowledge custodians and how AI behaves when it is judged.
- **Old ideas, new tools.** The recommendation products I designed for TrustedOpinion, Orange and Likelist come back in Sightlines' taste readings; my content-management work comes back in Copy Studio's modular reading of arguments; curriculum design comes back in AI-written film courses and how-to-watch guides.

SELECTED WORK, NOW LAUNCHED 2026

Inquiring Lines

inquiringlines.com

A public library of AI research that you navigate by question rather than by category. A paper comes in from arXiv or another source and becomes verbatim excerpts, a synthesis note that cites the papers behind it, and plain-language inquiring lines: research questions that connect findings across topics.

WHAT I DID The idea, the information design and the interface, the intake and editorial pipeline, and the admin console. Designed around what makes research interesting to follow: questions that connect findings, not summaries.

- About 3,000 papers and sources, nearly 3,000 synthesis notes and over 12,000 inquiring lines across 91 topics.
- Explore: paste a post or a link and see the research threads behind it. Inquiries follow AI news stories into the research.

Sightlines

sightlines.media

A film guide built on taste, mood and lineage, not “films like this.” Every film gets an original reading: what it is about, how it feels, what it descends from and what it shaped.

WHAT I DID The idea, the navigation designed around how people actually choose a film, the taste engine, the content pipeline with fact and spoiler checks, and the consoles. Taste readings, the feed and related films each took many rounds of design before they worked.

- More than 3,500 films, each with a reading, mood, lineage and critical reception; 218 film courses; how-to-watch guides for over 3,000 films.
- Taste readings from your own favorites (a Letterboxd list, a Reddit thread, a screenshot), mood sliders, and films related by facets, moods, lineage and influences.

WRITING AND TOOLS GRAVITY7.COM

- **The Evaluative Other** (2026). What alignment training teaches AI about being judged.
- **Conversation Is the Medium.** Interestingness as the design goal proper to AI, across eight kinds of user-AI interaction.
- **Knowledge Custodians.** AI turns the expert from a producer of knowledge into a custodian of AI-generated knowledge.
- **In progress:** a long essay on interaction design for AI: concepts, terms and heuristics.
- **Studio Critic** (studio.gravity7.com) and **Copy Studio**: tools that read a text for its reasoning, rhetoric, personas and AI tells.

EXPERIENCE

Deloitte Digital · Specialist Master

2012–2017

Helped recruit and build a client-facing customer experience team of UX and CX designers who carried client needs from the onsite consulting teams to Deloitte Digital's studio design teams. Contributed to the firm's go-to-market approach and strategy for digital transformation in the mobile-first years: iPhone and iPad apps, site redesigns and ecommerce. Led client web, mobile and ecommerce work: requirements, stakeholder and customer research, PRDs and BRDs, budgets and design oversight. Contributed to \$5M+ in sales. Clients included Agilent, Atlassian, Chevron, Cisco, Humana, Intel, Janssen, Massage Envy, State of Pennsylvania, TOMS, Wells Fargo Advisors and Deloitte Tax.

Gravity7 · San Francisco

1993–present

My own practice. A web agency from 1993 to 2012: strategy, design and development of more than 50 websites and social experiences for retail, technology, publishing and startup companies. Social interaction design and product strategy for social products from 2006. Since 2023, AI-first products of my own: Inquiring Lines and Sightlines, both launched in 2026.

RECENT ADVISORY

- **alphaXiv** (early 2025). Social interaction design contributions to alphaxiv.org, a site for discussing and commenting on research papers.

SELECTED SOCIAL INTERACTION DESIGN CLIENTS, 2006–2011

- **Livemapp**, London (2011). Product vision, social features, web and mobile experience for a realtime local news and recommendations map.
- **Likelist**, Sunnyvale (2010–11). Social commerce on the Facebook graph: retailers offered coupons to the friend people trusted for recommendations in that domain. Led the turn from search to social recommendations, Q&A and lists. On site; funded.
- **Klout**, San Francisco (2009). The 16 influence types.
- **aSmallWorld**, New York (2007–08). Social marketing re-orientation for an invite-only network. Acquired.
- **France Telecom / Orange**, South San Francisco (2006–07). Took a post-it note reading “Yelp-killer” to a working demo of a recommendation system; it won the R&D innovation award out of 156 internal projects.
- **TrustedOpinion** (2006). Social and product requirements for a movie recommendation site built on its users’ film expertise. Funded.
- Also: PeerPong, PopularMedia, ClipSync and Click.tv.

WEB STRATEGY, DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT, BEFORE THE SOCIAL WEB

Sites, identity systems and content management systems, including Smith & Hawken, Reel.com, Sierra Designs, Yoga Journal (Maggie award winner, 2002; finalist, 2003), Webvan and NEC.

EARLIER WORK TO 1998

- **Program coordinator, SPICE** (Stanford Program on International and Cross-Cultural Education; 1988, 1989–91). Published 12 curriculum units on US–Soviet relations and Eastern Europe: the start of about five years as a content creator, educational content designer and curriculum developer.
- **Producer, Illumina Productions** (1994–95). Designed the content and wrote the teacher and student curricula for the PBS videodisc of Ken Burns’s *The Civil War*, winner of the NAB Crystal Award for best educational technology product.
- **Producer, Scholastic** (1993). Early new media strategy; produced an electronic book CD-ROM.
- Partner, **SF-Bay Matchmaker** (1996–98); partner, **Illumina Online** (1995–96); creative director, **Luminaire** (1994–95).
- **Oracle Challenge Grant**, first place, \$100,000, for a cartoon-making toolkit.

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP, THEN

- **Author, *Principles of Social Interaction Design* (2012). PDF**
- **Founder, SxD Salon** (sxdsalon.org), a shared blog with industry leaders on social interaction design.
- **Senior Fellow, Society for New Communications Research** (SNCR).
- **Published in Mashable, ReadWriteWeb and Johnny Holland**. Blog: gravity7.com/blog/media/
- **Defined Klout’s 16 influence types** from an original set of four, correlated to Twitter activity and audience response.
- **Speaking**. IxDA12, Dublin (2012). Panelist, Milken Institute Global Conference (2006). Judge, Oracle OpenWorld Startup Pitch Contest.

EDUCATION

- **Stanford University**. BA, International Relations, with honors, 1988.
- **Free University Berlin**. Krupp Fellowship (one year), political science, 1989.

LINKS

gravity7.com / inquiringlines.com / sightlines.media / linkedin.com/in/adrianchan
References available on request.