

Kevin Boueri, *PhD*

HUMAN-CENTERED DESIGN RESEARCH & STRATEGY LEAD

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Human-centered design researcher and strategy lead with a decade of experience leading early-stage research across healthcare and complex service environments. A PhD anthropologist shaped by living across three continents, I bring a cross-cultural perspective and build trust quickly in unfamiliar contexts. I lead end-to-end studies using contextual inquiry, ethnographic observation, interviews, concept evaluation, and mixed methods — working at both the 10,000-foot level of organizational strategy and the ground level of individual features — and translate findings into experience principles and product direction teams can act on.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Optum, Inc.

Eden Prairie, MN

2022 – Present

Principal Design Researcher

Internal consulting across business units · End-to-end research scoping and execution · Qualitative and quantitative methods · Managing multiple concurrent research engagements · Executive workshop design and facilitation

CONTRIBUTION

Elevated Optum's user research practice from a tactical function to a strategic driver of decision-making, demonstrating how early-stage discovery research could help leadership make confident decisions around product direction and investment strategy — demand that led leadership to form a new Design Strategy team, where I led strategic research. Lead end-to-end research engagements for internal clients across a complex healthcare organization, from scoping and methods selection through data collection, synthesis, and translation into experience and product strategy.

- **Led end-to-end mixed-method research — three concurrent studies — for an enterprise platform decision affecting 65M+ eligible consumers;** partnered with product, design, and data science to turn a strategic directive into consumer-backed experience principles and strategic requirements.
- **Saved 10+ development sprints** through an early research intervention that challenged prevailing assumptions; partnered with service design to translate findings into an updated experience map and clearer product direction.
- **Led early-stage concept research on AI-powered healthcare experiences,** rapidly developing research stimuli, evaluating consumer responses, and translating findings into recommendations for long-term product strategy.
- **Prevented a \$1M+ misinvestment in an AI chatbot feature** by combining consumer concept evaluation with organizational workflow analysis, showing that the proposed experience would create bottlenecks rather than reduce effort.
- **Designed and facilitated executive workshops across Optum and UnitedHealth Group** to drive alignment on strategic decisions — from five-year digital product strategy for Optum's Care Delivery business to enterprise-wide service transformation.

Ethnographic Researcher

Multi-sited ethnographic research · Contextual inquiry and observation · Cross-cultural stakeholder engagement · Service design & journey mapping · Systems thinking

CONTRIBUTION

Independently designed and conducted comprehensive ethnographic research to understand user interactions within complex, multi-stakeholder ecosystems. Developed frameworks for synthesizing diverse qualitative data into strategic insights while navigating cultural and logistical complexity. Demonstrated ability to work independently in ambiguous environments, building stakeholder relationships across different communities and translating research findings into actionable recommendations for system optimization.

- **Delivered digital experience strategy recommendations** for the Lebanon Mountain Trail Association, analyzing user journey touchpoints and payment system inefficiencies to optimize tourist experience and organizational sustainability.
- **Independently designed and executed a 14-month multi-sited ethnographic study** employing a wide range of qualitative data collection methods — participant observation, interviews, focus groups, diary study, surveys — to better understand how hikers interacted with an ecotourism product within a post-conflict landscape.

Strategy Consultant

Research design · Secondary desk review · Cross-cultural stakeholder engagement · Stakeholder interviews · Focus groups

CONTRIBUTION

Evaluated the 10-year impact of client's \$6 million USAID project, the Lebanon Mountain Trail (LMT), and the performance of affiliated nonprofit, the Lebanon Mountain Trail Association.

- **Identified strategic opportunity areas** for client to strengthen environmental and economic sustainability of the LMT through interviews with key stakeholders in three languages (English, Arabic, and French).

RESEARCH METHODS & TOOLS

Research methods	Ethnographic observation, contextual inquiry, in-depth interviews, focus groups, diary research, concept evaluation, survey design, journey mapping, workshop facilitation
Research & design tools	Dscout, Qualtrics, MUIQ, Figma, Miro, Visio
Data & analysis	Databricks, Adobe Analytics
AI-assisted prototyping & analysis	Claude (incl. Claude Code), ChatGPT, Copilot, NotebookLM — used for statistical analysis in Python, rapid prototyping, synthesis support
Languages	English (native) · Arabic (fluent, spoken) · French (fluent, spoken)

EDUCATION

2022	PhD, Cultural Anthropology · Boston University, Boston, MA
2012	BA, Anthropology and History · Macalester College, St. Paul, MN