

My Journey from Research to Product

A.J. Brush

Principal Program Manager

Microsoft

ajbrush@microsoft.com

KEYNOTE ABSTRACT

After 11 years working in Microsoft Research studying technology use in homes and building technologies for families, in January 2016 I took a leap and joined the Microsoft Cortana product team with the goal of shipping the technologies I had been researching. For Cortana, I've helped drive far-field speech interaction experiences, ship Microsoft's Cortana Invoke speaker and led Microsoft's multi-assistant strategy including connecting Cortana and Alexa. I'll share the lessons I have learned in my journey from doing research to being part of a team shipping features used by millions of people including some surprising similarities between working in research and product development as well as unanticipated differences. With the rapid adoption of digital assistants from a range of companies on many different hardware form factors this is an exciting time to be working on speech interaction and digital assistance.

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHY

A.J. Bernheim Brush's area of expertise is Human-Computer Interaction with a focus on Ubiquitous Computing. Part of the Microsoft Cortana product group since January 2016, she spent the previous 12 years in Microsoft Research. In Cortana, her team works on connecting Cortana with other assistants like Alexa and improving the speech interaction experience. A.J. is most well known for her research on technologies for families and her expertise conducting field studies of technology. She has built and deployed numerous sensing systems into homes. She received an alumni achievement award in 2017 from UW's Paul G. Allen School of Computer Science, a Borg Early Career Award in 2010, and has over 20 patents. Her research has received a 10-year impact award, 2 best paper awards, and several best paper nominations. A.J. is a member of the UbiComp Steering Committee, on the Advisory Board of the ACM Proceedings on Interactive, Mobile, Wearable, and Ubiquitous Technology (IMWUT), an editor for Pervasive Computing Magazine, and a Senior Member of the ACM. To encourage diversity in computing, she serves on the CRA-WP board and was co-chair from 2014 - 2016.