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Paula Popowski
Product Design Lead
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510.499.6866

CORE COMPETENCIES

- # Brand Management
- # Creative Direction
- # Pitches and Presentations
- # Mentoring
- # Project management
- # People Management
- # Agile
- # Excellent Writing and Verbal Skills
- # User Research
- # User Insights
- # Usability Studies
- # A/B Tests
- # Typography
- # Color Theory
- # Style Guides
- # Pattern Libraries
- # Google Analytics
- # Integrated Marketing
- # Promotional Strategy
- # Messaging Strategy
- # Content Strategy
- # Storyboarding
- # Interactive Prototypes
- # High-fidelity Wireframes

TECHNICAL COMPETENCIES

- # HCI principles
- # Apple Human Interface Guidelines
- # Material Design Guidelines
- # Adobe Creative Suite
- # Figma
- # Sketch
- # InVision
- # Zeplin
- # JavaScript, HTML, CSS
- # ADA Compliance
- # WCAG 2.1
- # Information architecture
- # Tableau
- # JIRA

QUALIFICATION SUMMARY

- # **Product Design Lead with over fifteen years of diverse experience in Visual, UX, and UI Design, an MS in Strategic Brand Communication, and hands-on industry experience in delivering outstanding products and marketing materials in higher education, IT, real estate, hospitality, e-commerce, and nonprofits.**
- # **Proven strengths in creative leadership, including direct supervision, recruitment, and mentorship of 20 + co-workers with diverse backgrounds and levels of job experience.**
- # **Have led cross-functional teams through the ins and outs of shipping native and platform-agnostic products that are component-based, goal-driven, user-centric, and delightful to use.**

WORK EXPERIENCE

Lead UX Designer

COUNTRY Financial (Contract)

BLOOMINGTON, IL; 01/20–PRESENT

- # Define, oversee, pitch, and execute the end-to-end user experience of Agency-facing digital products
- # Uncover the behavior and motivations of users through analytics data, competitive analysis, interviews, surveys, usability studies, and support from dedicated business partners
- # Contribute to defining and socializing style guides, design principles, pattern libraries, and asset repositories and engage in frequent feedback with the design team, leadership, and business partners to raise the bar on quality through collaboration
- # Work collaboratively with other designers, product owners, project managers, and developers to establish clear design tasks, schedules, and expectations for the design team within Agile environment

Owner

PaulaDesign

CHAMPAIGN, IL; 12/03–PRESENT

- # Created recruiting and development materials for higher education, including viewbooks, newsletters, direct mail, and web (Illinois clients include LAS, School of Music, ECE, and the Business School)
- # Created digital and print materials for small businesses and nonprofits

Lead Product Designer

Jimmy John's Franchise, Inspire Brands

CHAMPAIGN, IL; 11/19–05/20

- # Oversaw brand implementation and led UI/UX design for externally facing native mobile apps including iOS, Android, Siri Shortcuts, Android Voice Assistant, and Apple Watch
- # Created user scenarios, performed competitive analyses, developed concept maps, designed interactive wireframes and prototypes, identified goals and KPI's of features, products, and campaigns, and compiled lean specification documents for web and mobile applications
- # Introduced user testing and data-driven design practices that saved hours of wasted design and development effort and trained developers and Scrum Master on best practices for incorporating design into Agile workflows.
- # Led design sprints that resulted in introduction of apps for Siri Shortcut, and Google Voice Assistant

Lead Designer

Wolfram|Alpha LLC, Wolfram Research

CHAMPAIGN, IL; 3/18–08/19

- # Partnered with interdisciplinary teams to develop new products and streamline existing user interfaces for a computational engine used by 1.2 million students, teachers, hobbyists, and researchers per day.
- # Oversaw design and participated in full creative life cycle of web projects, from

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EDUCATION

- # Gies College of Business and College of Media, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
MS with Highest Honors in Strategic Brand Communication
CHAMPAIGN, IL, 2019
- # Parkland College
Graphic Design AAS
CHAMPAIGN, IL, 2009
- # Rutgers University
BA with Highest Honors in Art History
NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ, 2001
- # Nielsen Norman Group
UX Certification

LANGUAGES

- # Fluent in English and Spanish
- # Intermediate fluency in Italian and Portuguese

VOLUNTEER WORK

- # Art Director, *Pens to Lens Screen-Writing Competition movie posters*
- # Coordinating Committee Member, *Illinois Web Conference*
- # Portfolio Reviewer, *AIGA, Parkland College, University of Illinois*
- # Guest Lecturer, *Parkland College gds293 Portfolio Seminar*
- # Board of Directors, *Champaign-Urbana Design Organization*

WORK EXPERIENCE (CONTINUED)

research to content strategy, business analysis, ideation, user experience, design, developer collaboration, and quality assurance

- # Executed design strategy for localization efforts, introduced a product-wide visual style guide and pattern library, and led a full responsive redesign of the website

Strategic Design Specialist

Creative Services, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
CHAMPAIGN, IL; 10/16–3/18

- # Took +80 projects per year from concept development to final execution, presenting ideas and status to stakeholders throughout the process
- # Provided leadership, direction, and implementation regarding UI design, usability, UX research, and ADA compliance
- # Provided leadership, direction, and implementation regarding brand discovery and strategic planning
- # Initiated proposal for digital strategy that included campus-wide pattern library and visual standards for websites and apps
- # Helped guide the University wordmark system guidelines and provide visual design, branding, and product expertise to campus communicators

Instructor

Allen Hall, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
CHAMPAIGN, IL; 08/15–05/17

Developed curriculum and taught *Introduction to Graphic Design*, a service-learning graphic design course that focused on applying design thinking and graphic design theory to real-world design issues

Art Director

National Center for Supercomputing Applications
CHAMPAIGN, IL; 08/10–10/16

- # Oversaw design for the NCSA through all print and digital channels
- # Defined project scopes, budgets, and timelines; drafted proposals; and delivered client presentations
- # Introduced and implement UX work-flows for digital media, including card sorts, focus groups, personas, user journeys, rapid prototyping, and monthly usability tests that informed improvements to design and architecture of websites and apps
- # Made recommendations on best practices for web and mobile technology, social media channels, design trends, and workflows
- # Lead creative teams in self-initiated projects, including GUI interfaces for supercomputers, a national award-winning responsive website, a museum exhibit retrospective of the NCSA, the first University of Illinois mobile app, and the first publication in higher education to use seamless augmented reality technology

Creative Director

Conservatorio S.A. (consultant)
PANAMA, PANAMA; 05/09–12/09

- # Collaborated with company owners, board of directors, and stakeholders in brand discovery exercises, identified synergies between sub-brands, refined business plan, and established a unified marketing strategy for all companies and projects affiliated with the Conservatorio brand
- # Created, developed, and managed bilingual national campaigns and marketing materials for national and international markets