

Rachel Lekherzak

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experience

Senior Designer / UX Manager / Creative Director with 10 plus years experience creating quality design solutions while managing high profile brands and cross functional teams for a variety of corporate, non-profit and small business clients.

Effective at leading strategy and execution of multiple projects concurrently from concept to design and production. Works well independently or as part of a team with other visual designers, information architects, content strategists, usability experts, developers, directors and clients; often acting in the role of creative director. Track record of meeting the most challenging deadlines without compromising quality. Known for working with and satisfying clients via creative solutions within strict brand guidelines. Steady advancement throughout career, with an emphasis on sustainable design, production and high quality user experiences.

work history

Senior UX Designer @ The Home Depot

November 2012 – Present

As part of the UX Concept Team focused on the program and portfolio level, conceptualizes the strategic direction of User Experience initiatives for The Home Depot Online. Leveraging site data and research, in partnership with Product Management and Usability, the concept team delivers high-level wireframes, comps and/or prototypes as well as user stories that are presented to Online Senior Leadership. Approved concepts are handed off to agile Work Stream Teams for detail design and implementation with direction from the UX Concept Team.

Concurrently influencing process development and change management while The Home Depot Online shifts to an agile development methodology; leveraging past experiences to guide UX and Product Management as they define a new, fast and nimble process.

Previously managing ongoing development of various site wide enhancements including social media integration, delivery and fulfillment, as well as the simplification of interface design and interactions for the content dense e-commerce site.

UX Design Manager & Creative Director @ IHG

January 2010 – November 2012

Provides overall user experience strategy and creative direction to a team of 20 within a complex and global corporate landscape. Supports efficient process and a positive team environment for the development of high quality website functionality and interactive marketing creative. Responsible for recruitment and retention of talent including Interface Designers, Information Architects, Content Strategists, Art Directors, Traffic Managers, and Copywriters. Represents the User Experience and Creative Services Group as senior creative officer to internal clients, senior leadership and external agencies to ensure cohesive and engaging brand experiences globally.

Fosters positive relationships between teams and other corporate functional areas.

Encourages strong collaborative relationships with Web & Interactive Marketing, Global eCommerce Technology and Global Brands. Provides evaluation, mentorship, and counsel to 20 direct reports, determining assignments, promotions, incentives as well as planning for team building events and forward thinking workshops.

Responsible for \$2,000,000 project to redesign and migrate 11 unique brand websites in 2011. Brand differentiation on a common code platform is the focus of 2012, in addition to a \$1,000,000 project to develop a new five star website experience launching in November which will become the stepping stone for web enhancements in 2013.

Founded the first internal creative department within IHG, leading talent recruitment and daily management of the growing team's development. Since it began in February 2011 the team size increased from 1 designer and 1 copywriter to 8 team members. The team provided IHG a cost savings of over \$1 million dollars in a six-month period as compared to spending with an external creative agency. As a result, there are plans for continued growth in this area.

Senior Designer @ Mobile Media Enterprises

March 2008 – November 2009

Created and executed concept, design and integration of experiential marketing events. Daily activities include brainstorming event concepts, design of visual elements through comps, development of templates and large format graphics to wrap vehicles and customized environments, art direction of supporting elements created by partners (such as websites), print management and quality control.

Specific applications included mobile marketing tours, in-store retail demonstrations, concert events, online viral campaigns, social networking, SMS handset promotions, interactive environments, kiosks and sporting events.

Senior Designer @ The Weather Channel

April 2006 – March 2008

Managed various print and web related projects for internal clients (mainly Consumer Marketing / Affiliate Marketing, HR, PR and Licensing and Merchandising) from concept, to design, through delivery while maintaining constantly evolving brand standards. Worked closely with and managed printers, freelance designers, copywriters, manufacturers, retailers and other cable network advertisers.

Project highlights include web design and art direction, educational brochures, direct mail, media kits, tradeshow displays, retail package design, event organization, advertisements, vehicle graphics, Custom MySpace Community design and an IMAX Theater film promotional standup with brochures. All projects executed with emphasis on sustainable design practices.

Print and Web Designer @ Global Exec Women

September 2005 – March 2006

Worked closely with founder of the organization to update their existing branding and website. Played a large role in the organization of monthly meetings and the first annual "International Woman of the Year Awards" gala. Responsibilities included event signage, programs and awards, web advertisements, email marketing campaigns, and organization of all nominations and awards.

Graphic Designer, Brand Manager @ Cornerstone Bancard

December 2003 – August 2005

Solely responsible for building the start-up company's identity and branding from logo design to marketing collateral and websites. Maintained and extended branding in all areas including brochures, magazine advertisements, direct mail campaigns, and tradeshow materials. Managed tradeshow planning, delivery and staffing on site, often dealing with sports talent and autograph signings.

education

American Intercontinental University | Atlanta, GA

October 2001 – September 2003

Graduated Summa Cum Laude, 3.9 GPA, Bachelor of Fine Arts in visual Communication.
Concentration on print design, minor in web design.

Kent State University | Kent, OH

September 1999 – May 2001

BFA program majoring in Visual Communication Design.

awards

Caught Orange Handed @ The Home Depot | 2013

Recognition for cross-team collaboration, innovation and partnership.

Bravo! Award @ IHG | 2012

Successful migration and redesign of 11 unique brand websites | IHG Family of Brands

Quarterly Award | Working Better Together @ IHG | 2011

Pioneered IHG's first ever internal creative department, saving the company over one million dollars and raising IHG's creative standards on the web.

Bravo! Award @ IHG | 2010

Art Direction of STAY YOU campaign launch | Holiday Inn Family of Brands