

OVERVIEW

Drawing on more than two decades of experience, I am deeply committed to collaborating with organizations at any stage of UX and agile maturity to facilitate their growth. My specialization lies in harnessing direct customer feedback to craft innovative user experiences, driven by a relentless pursuit of excellence.

Key Achievements & Qualifications:

- **Two Decades of Impact:** A track record of driving transformative change within global enterprises through strategic design and research.
- **Human-Centered Design Advocate:** Certified by the esteemed LUMA Institute, with additional certifications in UX Management and Research from NN/g Nielsen Norman Group.
- **Versatile UX Designer & Researcher:** Expertise in crafting UX artifacts including journey maps, roadmaps, personas, and wireframes, as well as conducting discovery interviews, usability testing, and design-thinking workshops, leveraging tools like Miro, Mural, Figma, Axure, and the Adobe Suite.
- **Project & Team Leadership:** Adept at managing complex projects with precision, complemented by strong time-management and presentation capabilities. Experienced in Agile Scrum methodologies.
- **Global Team Leadership:** Demonstrated success in leading cross-disciplinary teams across geographies, fostering collaboration and driving collective success.
- **Industry Recognition:** Honored with accolades from renowned organizations including CIO 100, AIGA, coolhomepages.com, Awwwards.com, and Print Magazine.
- **Continuous Learner:** Dedicated to personal and professional growth, engaging in reading, audiobooks, and ongoing trainings to enhance leadership skills and stay at the forefront of design methodologies.
- **Innovative AI Adoption:** Through curiosity and exploration of AI capabilities, I've leveraged advanced technology, for a myriad of tasks, from optimizing workflows to authoring and publishing two children's books on Audible.

DESIGN & LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

M&T Bank/Wilmington Trust

Product Designer

📅 September 2021 – Ongoing 📍 Remote

- **Agile Team Leadership:** Solely spearheaded product design for two Agile teams, managing multiple essential products vital for Institutional Client Services.
- **Innovative Portal Development:** Led the design of a customer-centric document portal, minimizing fraud risks and earning Wilmington Trust its first WCAG-compliant application status, ensuring inclusivity. Recognized with a Special DEI Award.
- **Efficiency Enhancement:** Directed the design and rollout of advanced functionalities for a core internal application, resulting in a remarkable 37-hour savings per engagement and substantial annual man-hour savings.
- **User-Centric Research Integration:** Established a robust embedded user research framework within the team, encompassing contextual interviews, discovery sessions, and usability testing, driving informed design decisions.
- **Collaborative Culture Advocate:** Fostered a synergistic culture of collaboration among product owners, business analysts, engineers, and designers. This initiative streamlined workflows, elevated product quality, and expedited feature delivery timelines.
- **Design Excellence:** Utilizing comprehensive user research to ensure design excellence, I expertly employed Figma techniques such as auto layout, componentization, and variable utilization to streamline workflow efficiency and boost productivity.
- **Agile Excellence:** Continuously elevated the Agile maturity of the product teams, resulting in advanced collaboration in the distinction of being recognized as the organization's most mature Agile team.

DESIGN & LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE (CONT'D)

PPG Industries

Product Designer

📅 September 2020 – September 2021 📍 Remote

Drove the advancement of powder coatings online sales through strategic user research, user-centric design, and innovative problem-solving. Collaborating closely with a design peer, we streamlined user journeys and conducted usability tests, ensuring our solutions exceeded industry standards. Grounded in a deep understanding of user needs and behaviors, my approach crafted intuitive interfaces and compelling user experiences, propelling PPG to new heights of industry leadership.

UX Design Manager

📅 May 2018 – August 2020 📍 Cranberry, Pennsylvania

- **Global UX Leadership:** Established and nurtured a world-class UX/product/service design practice at PPG Industries, the leading coatings company globally.
- **Process Optimization:** Pioneered continuous process enhancements, fostering collaboration and efficiency between UX and development teams.
- **Digital Transformation Leadership:** Steered design leadership initiatives through a pivotal digital transformation phase, driving Agile-methodologies adoption across the organization.
- **Design System Implementation:** Secured organizational buy-in for a comprehensive design system, leading to strategic partnerships with industry leaders like Sparkbox, Brad Frost, and Josh Clark, and the expansion of dedicated full-time UX resources.
- **Accessibility Advocate:** Championed accessibility and WCAG compliance, prompting the strategic staffing of specialized front-end developers within the UX team.
- **Usability Testing Impact:** Elevated e-commerce performance metrics by 9% and substantially reduced customer-service calls through strategic, data-driven usability testing initiatives.
- **Customer-Centric Application Design:** Directed the end-to-end research and design of a quality-control application tailored for esteemed automotive clients such as Ford, Nissan, and General Motors.
- **Strategic Partnerships:** Cultivated and managed key relationships with industry giants including Lowe's, The Home Depot, Walmart, Nautica, and Disney, enhancing brand visibility and collaboration.
- **Industry Evolution Leadership:** Guided the Information Technology division through dynamic industry shifts, from the adoption of HTML5 and responsive web design to embedding design thinking as a foundational skill set, yielding significant cost savings by minimizing reliance on external consultants.
- **Operational Efficiency:** Spearheaded initiatives to streamline development efforts, resulting in the creation of a versatile, scalable email template for 10+ paint brands, dramatically reducing annual development hours.

UX/UI Designer

📅 March 2010 – May 2018 📍 Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Leading digital UI/UX initiatives, I provided creative direction for design and copy across projects. Rooted in enhancing our websites, I gathered requirements from stakeholders, conducted user behavior analysis, and collaborated with the team to develop mobile-first prototypes using Axure. Transitioning to high-fidelity designs in Photoshop, I transformed wireframes into captivating visual experiences. Working with our Digital Engagement Manager, I shaped online strategies and campaigns, guiding front-end developers and ensuring quality assurance for exceptional web experiences.

DESIGN & LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE (CONT'D)

American Eagle Outfitters & Buzzhoney

Web Developer

📅 August 2009 – January 2010

📍 Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

During my contract roles at American Eagle Outfitters and Buzzhoney, I spearheaded transformative web development projects, leading the comprehensive rebuild of Giant Eagle's website and enhancing American Eagle Outfitters' e-commerce website and email marketing campaigns, resulting in elevated user experiences and increased customer engagement.

Larson O'Brien

Web Designer & Developer

📅 January 2008 – July 2009

📍 Mt. Lebanon, Pennsylvania

As a web designer and developer, I specialized in crafting and refreshing websites, with a focus on architectural building products. My role encompassed implementing internet marketing strategies, optimizing search engine content, and creating engaging email newsletters. I also developed dynamic Flash components, banners, and visually impactful PowerPoint presentations, consistently aiming to deliver compelling online experiences that resonated with our target audiences and drove digital success.

Sweeney & Associates

Creative Director

📅 March 2004 – December 2007

📍 Boardman, Ohio

- **In-House Web Development:** Successfully transitioned web development operations in-house, resulting in substantial revenue growth and significant cost savings by eliminating outsourced vendor expenses.
- **Leadership at a Young Age:** Demonstrated exceptional leadership and versatility by assuming the roles of Creative Director, Salesman, and Brand Ambassador for 18 months at the age of 25, during the owner's voluntary deployment to Iraq.

CERTIFICATIONS & LICENSES

Maven

Level Up with Figma

📅 January 2024

Nielsen Norman Group

UX Certificate – Research

📅 December 2022

UX Certificate – Management

📅 May 2019

Bureau of Internet Accessibility

Accessibility Best Practices

📅 April 2020

Luma Institute

Human Centered Design Workshop – Practitioner Certification Program

📅 August 2019

EDUCATION

Art Institute of Pittsburgh
Web Programming Certificate
📅 January 2009 – December 2009 📍 Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Art Institute of Pittsburgh
Bachelor of Science, Graphic Design
📅 September 1999 – December 2003 📍 Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

VOLUNTEERING

Champion Life Church
Worship Director
📅 August 2020 – March 2024 📍 Chippewa, Pennsylvania

- **Team Leadership:** Directed rehearsals and provided mentorship to a diverse team of 15+ volunteer musicians and singers, fostering collaboration and excellence—skills transferable to fostering cohesive design teams and leading collaborative projects.
- **Operational Scalability:** Orchestrated the seamless transition of the team to a new facility and successfully scaled operations from one to two Sunday morning services, demonstrating adaptability and effective project management—attributes vital in scaling product design solutions across platforms or product lines.
- **Efficiency Enhancement:** Optimized the sheet music storage and selection process, achieving a 50% reduction in preparation time for future planning—showcasing ability to identify inefficiencies and implement streamlined processes, akin to enhancing user workflows in product design.
- **Continuous Learning:** Pursued self-taught piano studies to deepen my understanding of music theory, equipping myself with foundational knowledge to lead the team more effectively—highlighting my proactive approach to learning and leveraging additional skills to enrich my leadership capabilities in product design.