

• SUZANNE HOWARD

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CREATIVE DIRECTOR | BRAND & MARKETING STRATEGIST | VISUAL DESIGN LEADER

Turning complex ideas into impactful creative across print, digital, social, event and experiential design.

Creative Director with 20 years of experience leading high-performing creative and marketing teams across education, publishing, retail, B2B and DTC spaces. I specialize in brand building, multichannel campaign strategy, and crafting research-driven creative across print, digital, social, event, and experiential platforms. I have led company-wide strategy, scaled design systems, and directed full-funnel marketing efforts that fueled business growth. I bring a collaborative, strategic mindset and a hands-on approach from developing curriculum programs to reimagining e-commerce experiences and growing social media engagement. My work often intersects with UX, including website redesigns and field-based user research to improve product design. I also integrate generative AI tools into my workflows to accelerate ideation, enhance storytelling, and deliver smarter creative at scale.

LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES

Creative Direction • Team Leadership • People Management • Branding Strategy • Project Coordination & Management
Educational Program Design • Brand Guideline Creation • Digital Marketing • Product Design • Communications
Change Management • Web Strategy & Design • UX Design • Catalog Design & Production • Social Media Marketing
Process Optimizations • Event Management • Data Analytics • Photography • Team Building/Recruiting
Cultural Transformation • Remote Team Coordination • Global Business Experience • B2B • DTC

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

CURRICULUM ASSOCIATES

Senior Design Manager, K-8 Language Arts (print & Digital) | February 2023-April 2025

Hired as Senior Design Manager, K-8 ELA, to lead the design team in a fast-paced, highly collaborative environment. Partnered with editorial, access & equity, product, and vendor teams to define, develop, and manage engaging design solutions for students and teachers from concept to final delivery. Deeply involved in efforts to address educational inequity through inclusive, research-informed design.

- Built and managed a team of 9 designers, including full-time employees, contractors, and vendor partners.
- Recruited talent and developed onboarding processes that reduced ramp-up time and improved team integration across remote and in-house roles.
- Led the K-2 design team in developing visual design and layout across print and digital components, creating engaging educational content in a fast-paced, collaborative environment.
- Partnered with editorial, product, UX research, and accessibility teams to define creative direction and user experience across core and supplemental language arts products.
- Directed the visual design and layout for print and digital components, ensuring cohesion and a playful, child-centered aesthetic for student engagement.
- Established design frameworks, branding guidelines, templates, schedules and production workflows to support quality and efficiency.
- Art-directed freelance illustrators and oversaw image selection in collaboration with photo researchers and art buyers, ensuring all visuals met clarity, accessibility, and DEIB standards.
- Collaborated with UX researchers to observe classroom pilot usage, gather pilot feedback, and iteratively improve product effectiveness and user experience.
- Developed culturally responsive content in collaboration with educators, enhancing representation and engagement.

CLOSE TO MY HEART | July 2022-February 2023

Marketing Director

Hired as Marketing Director to lead CTMH marketing and social media design efforts. Primary responsibilities involve developing and directing strategies to grow the company's presence and make a difference in customer growth in global markets including United States, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, and Australia.

- Led a Marketing team of 5 including communications, PR, social media, sales, and video.
- Managed creative photography, design, strategy, and analytics for all social media channels (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok, Blog and Pinterest). Collaborated with influencers to share content and promotions.
- Increased brand awareness by collaborating with designers and art studio.
- Oversaw all production and design vision for events such as conferences and corporate events.
- Collaborated with executive leadership to design and implement global marketing strategies.
- Developed and managed initiatives to drive growth through promotions, direct marketing, industry events, e-commerce, client retention programs, and other marketing campaigns.
- Led the redesign of e-commerce websites while partnering with IT developers to optimize UX features and functionality, including shopping, recruiting and more.
- Managed day-to-day marketing deliverables, manage, and prioritize marketing efforts and monitor progress.
- Developed SEO/PPC strategy.
- Conducted market research to create awareness of marketing trends and competitor movements.
- Partnered with training to develop content across all key target segments.
- Collaborated with other teams such as IT, Product Development, Training and Art Department.
- Created and maintained budgets.

EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION | 2013-2022

Marketing & Creative Director

*Hired as Creative Director for Usborne Books & More (a division of EDC); promoted to Marketing Director of EDC in 2018 to manage an eight-member geographically dispersed (remote and in-person) department, including three graphic designers, web designer, product specialist, merchandising coordinator, digital strategy, and storytelling coordinator. ***Since my departure in 2022, the company has been rebranded to PaperPie.***

- Enhanced company reputation and transformed operation into a recognizable brand, setting identity standards by creating and implementing a complete corporate branding guide.
- Provided branding leadership and vision, supporting company expansion from 3,000 to 70,000 consultants while enabling team members to achieve all sales objectives and unprecedented growth (from \$25M to \$140M+).
- Led the design and launch of a new e-commerce website while partnering with IT developers to optimize UX features and functionality, including shopping, hosting, recruiting, and more.
- Defined and executed global marketing and branding strategies while overseeing social media/web presence, including managing a Facebook Group that provides 70,000 consultants more than 1,000 designed files and 8,000 corporate images for use in branding and promotional projects/campaigns.
- Worked with publishers on product design for more than 1000 educational books, puzzles and toys.
- Managed large team of graphic designers, editors, merchandise coordinators and web designers.
- Served as lead product photographer and directed outside photographers for product and social media photo shoots.
- Led development of four 200-page catalogs created biannually.
- Created marketing and design for annual conventions, including stage, merchandise, and apparel design as well as product, signage, digital backdrops, app design and promotional materials.
- Worked with vendors to purchase paper, print catalogs, create stage sets, organize events and more.
- Managed Usborne Books & More "Business Supply Store" in providing 300+ business supplies and merchandise to clients including postcards, flyers, decals, large event signage, apparel, business resource materials, and more.
- Delivered promotional materials, product, and signage for in-person, virtual, and hybrid events and conventions, including developing artwork and video presentations displayed in NYC Time Square for the company's NASDAQ presentation.

VALUE NEWS, INC. | 2011-2013

Art Director

Managed artwork and content development for five consumer newspapers (four color and one black and white) each month.

- Managed the Value News marketing campaign, strategies, website and social media postings.
- Responsible for all aspects of design, from concept to layout to print, while driving achievement of tight deadlines.
- Supervised the graphic department in the design of 120 ads per month.
- Proofed and edited content articles for newspapers and supplied photographs to accompany written content.
- Collaborated with external design agencies to improve process of newspaper logistics and printing, achieving more efficient layouts, and thus reducing costs and increasing profit margins.

GREEN COUNTRY MARKETING | 2010

Ad Designer/Production Supervisor

Managed ad design and production for 10 publications while overseeing marketing, social media, and website graphics/art.

- Developed and produced multiple magazines from concept to print, including all ads and articles.
- Designed multiple logos, posters, brochures, and other print material under tight deadlines.
- Leveraged strong organizational skills to record/document all client activity.
- Proved instrumental to the team that worked on mobile app design.

OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION | 2005-2010

Graphic Designer

Developed a wide range of educational print materials for business and advertising projects, including catalogs, magazine ads, brochures, posters, billboards, logos, letterhead, business cards, package design, and more.

- Provided creative graphic design for large trade show displays and billboards while also developing graphics for animation, static web layouts, and web videos.
- Partnered with the curriculum department to illustrate and create curriculum for graphic design courses.
- Designed a variety of print materials including banners, flyers, brochures, posters, textbooks, signage and more.
- Instructed Photoshop and animation classes to employees of Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education.
- Leveraged technical writing skills to assist in preparing grant proposals and curriculum for educational courses.
- Created large scale event graphics and stage design for televised productions.
- Developed television graphics for news and educational shows using Adobe AfterEffects.
- Served as backstage manager for televised conferences and national events.
- Addressed accessibility of CareerTech websites and adjusted accordingly.

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY | 2000-2005

Graphic & Web Designer

Collaborated with the marketing department to create print design for student enrollment campaigns, fliers, posters, badge cards, and brochures while also developing websites primarily in HTML and PHP for the IT division of OSU.

- Designed and created web and digital content, from concept to publishing.
- Developed over 100 web sites for OSU using CSS, PHP and HTML.
- Led training classes in Photoshop, Illustrator, Dreamweaver, and animation to faculty and professors of OSU.
- Supervised marketing student employees who provided design and support for OSU events, clubs, campus flyers, etc.
- Designed large scale signage for campus computer labs, classrooms and more.
- Photographer for OSU websites, student organizations and fraternities.

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

Contributed to Magnetic Reading Foundations Grades K-2 perfect scores by EdReports (2023)

Top 10 in Digital Momentum Index (Social Media & Online Presence) - Usborne Books & More (2021)

Artwork and video presentations were displayed in NYC Time Square for the company's NASDAQ presentation. (2021)

Awards of Excellence - GGA Graphics Excellence Awards Competition (2016 & 2014)

Multiple awards from the Oklahoma Department of Education for logos, billboards, and achievements in design (2010)

American Institute of Graphic Arts - Treasurer of OSU Branch (2002-2004)

EDUCATION & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

B.F.A., Graphic Design (Graduated Summa Cum Laude) (2004) - OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY
Minor in Art History & Geography | Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society

Multimedia Digital Communications & Design (Transferred with 4.0 GPA) (2000) - NORTHERN OKLAHOMA COLLEGE
Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society

Professional Social Media Certification (2022) - HOOTSUITE ACADEMY

PROGRAM EXPERIENCE

- **AI Tools:** ChatGPT, Adobe Firefly, Generative AI in Photoshop, GrammarlyGo, Canva AI
- **Design:** Adobe CC (Photoshop, InDesign, Illustrator, Dreamweaver) Woodwing, Photography
- **Marketing:** Hootsuite, Mailchimp, Salesforce, Google Suite, Meta Ads
- **Social Media:** Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, TikTok, LinkedIn
- **UX/Dev:** Figma, HTML, CSS, PHP, Bootstrap, Shopify, WordPress, XD, UX Research
- **Project Management:** Asana, Trello, Smartsheet, Notion, Mural, Confluence, Sharepoint, Quantum
- **Video & Media:** Premiere, AfterEffects, Vimeo, YouTube, TikTok, Zoom