

JOHN WELKER CREATIVE SERVICES LEADER & DESIGN DIRECTOR

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Creative services and design leader with 20+ years of progressive experience in visual design, art direction, brand identity, integrated campaigns, and digital experiences for Fortune 500 companies, universities, healthcare organizations, cultural institutions, and complex organizations. Leads multidisciplinary creative teams and cross-functional partners through concept development, creative strategy, visual design, stakeholder presentation, production, quality review, and final delivery across digital, print, multimedia, and brand environments. Experienced translating business objectives into compelling multi-channel creative solutions and developing and enforcing brand guidelines, enterprise design systems, templates, and production standards. Advanced expertise in Adobe Creative Cloud and Figma, with demonstrated adoption of generative AI design tools and emerging technologies to enhance ideation, design development, production, and creative workflows. Deep expertise in typography, layout hierarchy, print production, digital accessibility, UX/UI, creative critique, executive presentation, stakeholder collaboration, and team development.

CORE COMPETENCIES

Creative Services Leadership · Creative Direction · Visual Design · Brand Strategy · Integrated Campaigns · Multi-Channel Creative · Enterprise Brand Systems · Design Systems · Brand Guidelines · Team Leadership & Mentoring · Cross-Functional Collaboration · Stakeholder Management · Executive Presentation · Creative Quality Assurance · Creative Critique · UX/UI · Multimedia Design · Typography & Visual Hierarchy · Print & Digital Production · Digital Accessibility · ADA Compliance · Generative AI · AI-Assisted Creative Workflows · Emerging Technologies · Resource Coordination · Digital Asset Management · Creative Production

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

PRINCIPAL / ART DIRECTOR

Pixels and Points, Richmond, VA, Oct. 2006-Present

- Leads creative strategy, concept development, visual design, art direction, and brand identity for integrated creative initiatives spanning digital, print, multimedia, campaigns, and brand systems for Fortune 500 companies, universities, healthcare organizations, and cultural institutions, including Florida International University, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Children's National, and Marriott International.
- Serves as primary creative lead from business objectives and initial brief through concept development, stakeholder presentation, production, quality review, and final delivery, translating organizational goals into compelling multi-channel creative solutions while balancing creative ambition, timelines, and production requirements.
- Develops and enforces brand guidelines, visual systems, templates, typography standards, and production processes across digital, print, and multimedia environments, ensuring accuracy, visual polish, brand consistency, accessibility, and launch readiness.
- Directs responsive websites, mobile interfaces, UX/UI, landing pages, email, social, video, and motion experiences, collaborating with developers, writers, photographers, marketing leaders, project managers, and other multidisciplinary partners to deliver integrated creative work.
- Leads creative presentations, critique, and quality assurance, partnering directly with clients and senior stakeholders to communicate design strategy, gather feedback, resolve priorities, and guide projects through refinement and final delivery.
- Leads and mentors creative talent, including remote contractors, providing creative direction, feedback, production guidance, and professional development while coordinating resources, workflows, digital assets, templates, documentation, vendors, and print production.
- Champions generative AI, emerging creative technologies, and automation across ideation, visual exploration, design development, production, and workflow development to improve creative capabilities and production efficiency.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE (CONTINUED)

CO-FOUNDER / ART DIRECTOR

Digital Playbooks, Baltimore, MD, Mar. 2010-Dec. 2014

- Led product vision, creative strategy, UX/UI design, visual direction, and multimedia development for a proprietary interactive digital platform serving professional, collegiate, and amateur sports organizations.
- Designed native iOS and web applications, creating intuitive, visually engaging interactive experiences for complex, multimedia-rich content.
- Developed the PlayAction® App, launched through Apple's App Store in 2011 and earning coverage in CNET, CNN and The Washington Post.
- Directed multidisciplinary creative and technology contributors, including mobile developers and sales representatives in Europe, coordinating creative development across distributed teams.
- Established strategic relationships with Apple Education and AirWatch to develop distribution opportunities and expand the platform's reach within collegiate organizations.
- Managed product development, creative assets, trademarks, presentation materials, and production requirements through the platform's preparation for acquisition by a leading competitor in sports technology.

ADJUNCT PROFESSOR

Towson University Art Department, Towson, MD, Mar. Sep. 2008–May 2009

- Developed and taught introductory graphic design coursework focused on Adobe Creative Cloud and real-world design practice.
- Led students through branding, visual identity, concept development, presentation, typography, design critique, and professional creative processes.

ART DIRECTOR / SENIOR DESIGNER

R2integrated, Baltimore, MD, Sep. 2002–Oct. 2006

- Led concept development, visual design, brand identity, art direction, and integrated creative development across a national client portfolio spanning real estate, communications, technology, and retail.
- Managed and provided creative direction for a multidisciplinary team of six designers across multiple accounts, establishing priorities, reviewing work, mentoring team members, and maintaining creative quality and consistency.
- Directed creative development as the design studio evolved from a two-person boutique into a full-service digital agency, collaborating with creative directors, developers, strategists, and account teams to deliver integrated digital and brand solutions.
- Translated client business objectives into visual concepts, brand systems, digital experiences, presentations, and multi-channel creative solutions.
- Led creative presentations and collaborated directly with clients and internal stakeholders throughout concept development, design refinement, production, and delivery.

SENIOR DESIGNER

SWIM Design Consultants, Washington, DC, Jun. 2001–Sep. 2002

- Designed accessible digital interfaces, multimedia kiosks, websites, interactive experiences, and visual communications for major cultural and educational institutions.
- Created ADA-compliant digital experiences for The Phillips Collection, Princeton University Art Museum, Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum, and National Museum of the American Indian.

EDUCATION

Bachelors of Fine Arts (BFA), Graphic Design / Visual Communications

Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA), Baltimore, MD

TECHNICAL & CREATIVE EXPERTISE

Adobe Creative Cloud: Photoshop · Illustrator · InDesign · After Effects · Acrobat · Premiere Pro

Design & Prototyping: Figma · UX/UI · Responsive Design · Design Systems · Interactive Prototyping

Creative Technology: Generative AI · AI-Assisted Design Workflows · Emerging Creative Technologies · Automation

Creative Practice: Brand Identity · Art Direction · Creative Direction · Typography · Layout · Visual Hierarchy · Presentation Design · Video & Motion · Digital & Print Production · Digital Accessibility · ADA Compliance

Additional: Digital Asset Management · Creative Production · Vendor Coordination · Project Collaboration · Team Leadership · Creative Critique · Mentoring · Stakeholder Presentations

ADDITIONAL

Fluent in Spanish. Proficient in French & Italian.

PORTFOLIO

johnwelker.com

CONTACT

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