

Rob Ashcom

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Summary

I am a full lifecycle Product and User Experience designer. As a trusted Principal, Lead, or Design Manager, I identify problems and opportunities through quantitative and qualitative research and active, empathetic collaboration with internal stakeholders and customers. I iterate on our understanding of the problem and the solutions, communicating to the team, keeping everyone aligned. I produce rapid, iterative mockups with information architecture, interaction design, writing, & visual design. Depending on a project's needs, I prototype and test solutions with customers in live usability testing sessions (w/ Figma & Zoom) to save engineering resources.

I consistently produce high-quality user experiences by maintaining three vital touchpoints with customers/users: In the beginning, (1) learn who you're designing for and what their needs & pain points are, then (2) test your design proposals with them, and (3) then gather feedback from the live product and real customers to see how we did.

See my recently patented SQL AI Assistant: Couchbase iQ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ldVREIRSswU>

Principal User Experience Designer

Couchbase Santa Clara, CA

2015 – 2024

Couchbase is a NoSQL database that powers things like the Apple store. As the Couchbase developers added features over the years like Text Search, Indexing, Analytics, etc., I researched, designed, tested, and co-wrote the interface code for Database Admin and Developer tools, producing user personas, user journeys, wireframes, prototypes, high-fidelity mockups, a design system, information architecture (IA), usability test reports, heuristic evaluations, competitive analysis, accessibility audits, and customer journey maps.

- ▶ Invented a patented ai assistant for the Couchbase Query Workbench (Couchbase iQ) that assists writing SQL++ queries with OpenAI's LLM and can also generate fake datasets, self-correct its answers, and explain everything. Increased company valuation upon announcement of feature. [Couchbase iQ](#)
- ▶ Re-designed & re-coded the Couchbase Server UI (NOT Capella!) with FlexBox, icon fonts, and a modified Material Design design system. Enabled new era of innovation with a modern, pluggable GUI architecture.
- ▶ Researched customers' use cases (PayPal, LinkedIn, etc.), tested prototypes with them to drive innovation. Ensured design solutions aligned with strategic goals and remained viable with customers.
- ▶ Hired, managed, mentored designers.

User Experience Design Manager

RiseSmart, San Jose, CA

2013 – 2015

RiseSmart provides career coaching and resume writing to laid-off workers in companies like eBay and Caterpillar. Besides services, they offer essentially enterprise software to assist job seekers, digitizing the expertise of dozens of human coaches and writers.

- ▶ Reduced risk in major redesign by conducting live user testing (more than 20 sessions in the first 9 months).
- ▶ Increased market visibility, service offering, and competitive advantage by delivering UX design on schedule for a new SaaS job search and management app, a web library of help documentation, and several pilot prototypes for new HR apps aimed at improving employee engagement.
- ▶ Hired, managed, mentored designers.

User Experience Design Manager (founding team)

Wanderful Media, Los Gatos, CA

2012 – 2013

Wanderful Media was a green field startup assembled to combine regional advertising inserts from 5 different newspaper/media companies who were all shareholders. In 9 months we launched the product!

- ▶ Created core IP value through the design and launch of a new product concept in first 9 months.
- ▶ Ran focus group research, conducted usability testing, and produce rapid iterative designs for a responsive web solution paired with a native iOS app.
- ▶ Kept company's product on track and on time through daily/weekly testing with live users.
- ▶ Hired and managed ux ui visual designers.

Product Design Manager

Coupons.com, Mountain View, CA

2010 – 2012

Coupons.com is the exclusive provider of most printable coupons in the US with a monthly audience of 5,000,000 unique visitors. The website for serving up those coupons was outdated and dysfunctional when I began. I produced user personas, wireframes, prototypes, high-fidelity mockups, a design system, information architecture (IA), usability test reports, competitive analysis, interaction design specifications, content strategy, A/B testing results, accessibility audits, customer journey maps, annotated screens.

- ▶ Implemented modern UX design/testing methodology including an A/B testing platform. Lead Agile design effort geared toward matching the pace of Agile developers.
- ▶ Delivered UX design for a complete site overhaul based on research & A/B testing data.
- ▶ Created original patented technology for delivering coupons via Facebook.
- ▶ Re-designed and ported the mobile app to Android for the launch of the Motorola Xoom tablet (working at Google HQ by invitation).
- ▶ Hired, managed, and mentored user experience and graphic designers.

MS, Human Computer Interaction

Iowa State University, Ames, IA (incomplete) 2010 – 2017

MA, Creative Writing

Sonoma State University, Rohnert Park, CA 1999

BM, Music Production & Engineering

Berklee College of Music, Boston, MA 1994

Technical Skills

*Design Systems
UX Research
Prototyping
Product Design*

Information Design

*Design Review
Web Design
Wireframing
Prompt Engineering*

HTML/CSS

*Enterprise Software
Human Computer Interaction
Large Language Models (LLM)
Generative AI*

AI/ML

*Product Ideation
Visual Design
Saas*

Leadership Skills

*Communication
Project Management
Articulation*

Design Thinking

*Public Speaking
Management
Active Listening*

Strategy

*Design Leadership
Critical Thinking
Presentations*

Product Requirement

*Definition
Storytelling*

Design Tools *Figma, Sketch, Photoshop, Adobe Creative Suite, Adobe Experience Cloud, Adobe InDesign, Jira, ChatGPT*