

Rob Ashcom

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Principal User Experience Designer

UX, UI, iX, iA | Research, Prototype, Test | Strategic Leader, Mentor | AI | Databases & Developer Tools

Professional Summary

A full product lifecycle, full-stack designer and leader. I research and test assumptions with customers and subject-matter experts. Lead brainstorming and design sessions. Build strong, trusting relationships across teams to surface the best ideas and the hidden requirements. I spend time in Figma designing and prototyping iteratively, then socializing designs with coworkers and users, and championing the designs that clear all the hurdles. My process and the products I design increase stock valuation, revenue, retention, and team morale — especially in fast-moving, early-stage companies — because design is fun!

AI Patent granted: [AI Assistant | Capella iQ](#)

Work Experience

Principal User Experience Designer

Couchbase, Santa Clara, CA

2015 – 2024

- Researched, designed, prototyped, tested, and co-wrote the interface code for Database Admin and Developer tools, delivering user personas, new information architecture, wireframes, prototypes, high-fidelity mockups, design systems, and usability reports.
- Created the CBUI design system and pluggable UI framework so small teams can easily develop new products like RBAC, Indexing, Text Search, Analytics, Query Workbench, and Query Monitoring.
- Invented, released, and patented Capella iQ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ldVREIRSswU> - an AI agent that assists users writing SQL queries.
- Drove innovation and alignment by researching dozens of major customers' use cases (Apple, PayPal, LinkedIn, Viber, etc.) in person, often on site, and rapidly iterating prototypes with them, producing:
- Customizable dashboard: properly organized and annotated the stats themselves, designed and coded a complete modern dashboard (customizable charts and dashboards).
- Developer Workbench: full SQL querying with textual and graphical results, AI assistant.
- FOR ALL PROJECTS LISTED ABOVE, I was the sole UX designer. I conceived and led them, end-to-end.
- Hired, managed, and mentored designers.

User Experience Design Manager

RiseSmart, San Jose, CA

2013 – 2015

- Transformed dozens of human career coaches and resume writers' expertise into a self-service, B2C SaaS application.
- Reduced risk in major redesign by conducting live user testing with laid-off workers in companies like eBay and Caterpillar for 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, and mentored designers.

User Experience Design Manager (founding team)

Wanderful Media, Los Gatos, CA

2012 – 2013

- Employee #9 in this greenfield startup assembled to combine regional advertising data feeds from 5 different newspaper/media companies who were all shareholders.
- Created core IP value through the conception, design, and launch of a new product in the first 9 months, merging over 20 data sources and customizing for location.
- Ran focus group research in 12 sessions, conducted ~6 live usability tests per week, and produced rapid iterative designs for a responsive web solution paired with a native iOS app in 6 months.
- Hired and managed UX, UI, and visual designers.

Design & Technical Skills

AI-first product design, design systems, UX research, prototyping, wireframing, information design, visual design, interaction design, product design, enterprise software, iterative design, prompt engineering, generative AI, AI/ML, SaaS, HTML/CSS, JavaScript, Agile, Scrum, human-computer interaction, usability testing.

Leadership & Communication

Design leadership, project management, strategy, strategic thinking, critical thinking, storytelling, presentations, public speaking, active listening, communication, cross-functional collaboration, team management, hiring & mentoring.

Design Tools

Figma, Sketch, Balsamic, Photoshop, Illustrator, Adobe Creative Suite, Adobe Experience Cloud, Jira, ChatGPT

Education

Iowa State University, Ames, IA

MS Coursework Human Computer Interaction - incomplete

Sonoma State University, Rohnert Park, CA

MA Creative Writing

Berklee College of Music, Boston, MA

BM Music Production & Engineering

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