

JAMES CABRERA

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE



DECEMBER 2022 - PRESENT

Founder

- Fully self-managed product and design strategy consulting business
- Helped to deliver for several clients simultaneously while also pitching new client interest
- Serviced 7 clients in Q1 2023
- Executes on end-to-end design solutions such as Brand Design, Graphic Design, UX Research, UX Design, Figma Prototyping, Design System Development, HTML/SCSS Prototypes, Squarespace Design, and SEO Strategy implementation
- Provided graphic design production, UX design, and brand consulting for a crypto protocol with \$125M market capitalization
- Provided UX and Product Design consulting for a construction project management platform that raised \$3.9M in seed funding
- Provided 2 pre-seed start-ups with designed and interactive Figma prototypes for investor pitches
- Provided SEO strategy consulting for a \$16.5M Series A mental health app
- Provided website design production for a new podcast network startup



MARCH 2019 - DECEMBER 2022

Head of Design & Special Projects

- Joined as one of the first 10 members of the company
- Responsible for all design needs, including branding, UX/UI, front-end of website, sales decks, video, and article artwork
- Responsible for leading special projects which includes overseeing podcasting strategy, live streaming production, and event branding
- Contributed to live production code, helping architect the foundation of a new design system from scratch by committing HTML/SCSS for new Vue components through PRs
- Built high-fidelity testable prototypes of new product ideas to scope out opportunity and the costs to pursue
- Directly managed both the Design Team and the Podcast Production Team. Provided each team member with weekly mentorship and conducted annual reviews.
- Collaborated hands-on with both the Product management team and the Engineers to deliver and ship products
- Built the design team from 1 to 5 members, which included a mix of Graphic Design Interns, Product Designers, and an Art Director
- Established podcast operations and hired the production team to help create The Scoop podcast with Frank Chaparro. I served as Executive Producer for the podcast and Growth Manager for the podcast, creating a new revenue stream for the company
- Helped establish Product team by leading the hiring and onboarding process for the company's first 2 Senior Product Managers
- Led product design strategy and execution for re-launch of The Block Research as a separate product, launched in June 2021
- Led the design system strategy for The Block's B2B Data, Research and News platform, The Block Pro
- Developed a winning hackathon project called Escher Sketch, which was an automation tool that produced stylized feature images for stories with one-click. This tool would free up time from Graphic Designers to focus on more thoughtful and strategic visual campaigns



AUGUST 2017 - MARCH 2019

Design Director

- Led Design ultimately up to Gimlet Media's acquisition by Spotify
- Responsible for all visual design needs, including but not limited to brand image, show art direction, marketing, product design, merchandise design, event design, packaging design and more
- Developed processes to deliver on all marketing needs, sales pitches/presentations, internal collateral, office needs and more
- Took the lead on managing all Software Engineering, Data Engineering, and Technology initiatives
- Production/editing of video, art direction of key art for all shows, art direction of all branded podcast artwork/marketing, direction of photoshoots, UX/UI + front-end engineering of website, art direction of live events, and more
- Led rebranding initiative which was an 8-month long process. Included pitching to the Founders (Alex & Matt) and Executive team, budgeting, conducting an agency search, leading the design direction and coordinating feedback
- Created Podcast Cover Art strategy which was broadly endorsed in the industry by Apple Podcasts Marketing Team
- Grew in-house Design Team from 1 to 3 members. 2 Designers and 1 Software Engineer directly reported to me, while also coordinating relationships with freelance designers to execute on design projects
- Worked with high-profile clients on art direction for their podcasts produced by Gimlet Creative, including Squarespace, Adobe, Lyft, New Balance, Reebok, and Mastercard to name a few

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE (CONTINUED)



FEBRUARY 2015 - AUGUST 2017

Senior Product Designer

- Designed, architected, prototyped, and proposed new scalable core platform product features
- Led exploratory design on all new platform and technology initiatives
- Designed, prototyped, produced, and developed one-off story experiences and landing pages
- Designed, defined and prototyped new mobile app concepts
- Tested and vetted new tools and 3rd-party software for opportunities to streamline and manage bespoke story template efforts
- Worked with Software Engineers, Art Directors, Illustrators, 3D Artists, Editorial, and Social team—at the critical juncture point to deliver interactive content experiences
- Served as the Product Design Lead on Refinery29's first iOS app, ThisAM
- Served as the UI Design lead in the architecting of a card-based design system for refinery29.com
- Led website design and development of Refinery29's 29Rooms websites for 2016 and 2017 editions
- Led website design and development for Refinery29's New Fronts presentations in 2016 and 2017
- Led design and development of new experimental web storytelling formats, which required collaboration from on-the-ground story producers (e.g. Behind the Headlines feature on Ilhan Omar's run to congress). NYTimes and Google (AMP Stories) also released similar story formats around the same time.



SEPTEMBER 2013 - JANUARY 2015

Visual Designer II

- Created the UI of the Design System and defined the properties of the Theming Engine behind the Tempest Content Platform
- Designed the UI for new product features, both on the user-facing platform and editor-facing proprietary CMS
- Responsible for leading special projects which includes overseeing podcasting strategy, live streaming production, and event branding
- Designed quarterly marketing pages promoting brand partnerships and company initiatives (Say Quarterly Issue 7)
- Worked with Software Engineers, UX/UI Designers, and Editors to push new product features for approval
- Helped on-board and launch the first 25 media brand content partners onto the Tempest Platform
- Collaborated with SF-based Engineering team from the New York office, before remote working was the norm. Travelled to San Francisco twice a year to work on-site with the Engineering team
- Was part of a winning Hackathon team called Project Iris, which built a live theme-editor on top of our existing Tempest product platform



JANUARY 2011 - SEPTEMBER 2013

Senior Web Designer

- Worked with the Creative Director to conceptualize seasonal campaigns for marketing creative across mail-order catalogs, web, and retail stores
- Worked with individual product category buyers/sellers to push specific products on the website based on sales metrics
- Worked with the Merchandising Manager to redesign all site promotional graphics on a weekly basis to match sales and react to goal projections
- Designed 3-4 e-mail marketing sales newsletters a week
- Created IAB banner ad campaigns (multiple size output) as requested by the Ad Campaign Manager
- Completed a redesign of the CCS e-commerce site within the limitations of its current platform
- Collaborated with in-house photographers to create a consistent look as we transitioned all product shots from isolated and flat to being shown on-model and in-situation
- Adapted new processes to streamline buyers' roles in creative merchandising decisions
- Designed UX updates to the cart checkout flow for CCS which eventually was adapted by other Foot Locker banners such as Footaction, Eastbay and Lady Foot Locker



MAY 2008 - NOVEMBER 2009

Lead Creative Designer

- Simultaneously managed the visual development and art direction of multiple lead-generating advertising campaigns
- Designed Landing Pages, Micro-sites, and Banner Ads from start-to-finish
- Designed primarily SEO-driven designs that are modular and rapidly changeable to react to trending topics and searches and optimize clicks
- Collaborated with a Developer, an SEO strategist, and a copywriter to ship websites and execute on affiliate campaigns

EDUCATION



Stony Brook University

AUGUST 2005 - DECEMBER 2008

B.S. Mathematics, Minor concentration in Physics

- Cumulative GPA: 3.38
- Notable Courses: Foundations of Analysis, Applied Complex Analysis, Applied Algebra, Geometric Structures, Computer-Assisted Math Problem-Solving, Linear Algebra, Waves & Optics, Mechanics, Thermodynamics and Statistical Mechanics, Electromagnetic Theory, Electronics and Instrumentation.

CONFERENCE TALKS

The Power of Defining Success by Design

MAY 2021 — REMOTE

Presented at Creative Directions 2021

Macroscopic Design: Design for the Most of Us

MARCH 2019 — AUSTIN, TX

Presented at Ignite Talks at SXSW 2019

The Hard Sell of Design

JULY 2017 — ONLINE WEBINAR

Presented at RGD.ca

Voice: The Invisible UI Nobody Speaks About

MARCH 2017 — AUSTIN, TX

Panel at SXSW 2017

Designing Refinery29's First iOS App, ThisAM

NOVEMBER 2016 — ROME, ITALY

Presented at World Usability Day Rome 2016

When Content is Bae

SEPTEMBER 2016 — DALLAS, TX

Presented at Big Design Conference 2016

Please Recycle: How I Learned to Design Products

NOVEMBER 2015 — QUEZON CITY, PI

Presented at Form Function and Class 6

The Science Behind Modular Design Thinking

JUNE 2015 — LAS VEGAS, NV

Presented at Future Insights Live 2015

PUBLISHED BOOKS

Modular Design Frameworks (2017)

A Projects-based Guide for UI/UX Designers

- Written from 2015–2016
- Published in 2017 by Apress, a division of Springer Nature
- Catalogued in the Library of Congress

