Laura Melbourne

CONTACT

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Visit my profile at Linkedin

PROFILE

Seeking a full-time or consulting position within an organization that focuses on the user experience to create usable, attractive, informative, and interaction-rich products.

QUALIFICATIONS

For more than 13 years, I have been creating and managing design solutions to complex business problems, devising and executing design strategies, and employing user-centered design principles that delight and inspire. I am a creative who knows business, and how to communicate it visually and verbally;

I have a demonstrated track record of building cross-discipline design teams, and delivering effective presentations and prototypes to drive new business. I'm a respected leader committed to communicating skillfully among business and creative stakeholders and leveraging design activities to impact business values;

Specialties include: Creative Direction, Design Strategy, Team-Building, Interactive Design, Visual Design, Branding, User Interface (UI) Design, User -Centered Design, Rapid Prototyping, Design Presentations, Client Relationships, Design Management, Advertising, Workflow Methodology, Resource Planning;

I am familiar with both Macintosh and Windows XP platforms, HTML and XHTML, CSS authoring with experience with DHTML, JavaScript, JQuery, and CGI . Highly skilled with HomeSite, Fireworks, Dreamweaver, Cute FTP, Omnigraffle, Microsoft Office Suite, Quark XPress, InDesign, PageMaker, Illustrator, Freehand, Photoshop, ImageReady, and Acrobat. Proficient writing and editing skills;

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Freelance Designer and Web Consultant —1990-present

— Usability consultant, user interface designer, web/graphic designer, and art director.
— Present and former clients include: AOL Personal Finance Channel, Investor's Business Daily, Sage Online, Multex.com (now Reuters.com), AOL Media Space, Mom's Online, Oxygen Network, National Geographic, Coca-Cola, Stamps.com, American Greetings, Verio, CBS News, WBCA, UAW, Habitat for Humanity, Yachad-dc.org, The Tara Sirman's Foundation, General Saw Corporation, SlingPage, Gatherings Restaurant.

Director of User Experience, Miva, Inc. — 2008-March 2009

— Hire, mentor and train User Experience team;
— Ensure consistent, high-quality design and front-end implementation for all customer-facing applications, internal applications and the MIVA corporate Web site;
— Manage project plans, budget and resource allocations across projects;
— Define and implement a standardized User Experience design process and deliverables;
— Develop user research and usability testing plans, conduct research and testing sessions, and document results and recommendations;
— Build and maintain a unified library of core CSS, Java Script and image files to ensure application consistency and performance;
— Curate a centralized online library of design patterns, standards and implementation examples for our application design and development teams;
— Act as an evangelist for the User Experience discipline throughout the company, both within the technology organization and with our business sponsors and stakeholders;

User Experience Designer, Miva, Inc. — 2006-2008
— Design and develop internal Client Service, Knowledge Management, Intranet and Operations-focused applications;
— Conduct user research sessions, heuristic analysis and usability tests to aid in design and refinement of applications;
— Facilitate collaborative design sessions with business stakeholders and IT colleagues;
— Design application structure and behavior through:Site maps and organizational models, Wire frames, Task flows, Prototypes (Paper and HTML), Functional specifications
— Define and iterate online design, architecture and development standards;
— Design the structure and user experience of a project by translating client business requirements into functional requirements and information architecture for large Web-based applications;
— Create user-centered design systems by employing user testing, participatory design techniques and ethnographic research to define site functionality, navigation and interaction;
— Execute Web production tasks, including CSS, XHTML, DHTML, and Java Script for client applications and interactive prototypes;
— Establish Quality Assurance standards and techniques.

Art Director, America OnLine — 1999-2001
— Responsible for the overall design of AOL's Member Publishing Tools: AOL Easy Designer, AOL People Connection, Groups@AOL, Web Message Boards, 123 Publish, AOL Hometown, AOL Community Centers;
— Contributed to the design and maintenance of various AOL Programming Areas: AOL People Connection, Groups@AOL, AOL Hometown, 123 Publish, Easy Designer, AOL Web Message Boards, AOL Community Centers, AOLPlus, AOL.COM, AOL News, AOL News Photo galleries, AOL Government Guide, Elections 2000, AOL Weather Center, AOL Sports, AOL Men's, AOL Women's, AOL Kids Only, AOL Teens, Love@AOL, AOL@School, AOL Specials, You've Got Pictures, Netscape Netbusiness;
— Participated in product analysis, including needs assessments, competitive analysis, user studies, usability testing with paper prototypes and live focus group testing, process mapping, and extant data analysis;
— Collaborated with various VPs, directors, product managers, designers, and developers for heuristic analysis of various interface factors, including usability, visual communication, and branding for AOL and their content partners;
— Developed user interface and information design standards for projects, including: site maps, user flow, and concept diagrams;
— Developed visual design standards, including: layout grids, exact size and spacing of elements in the interface, fonts, colors, interactive behavior, page-level messaging, labeling standards, and co-branding guidelines;

Sr. Designer, Electra (Now Oxygen Network); AOL Greenhouse — 1997-1999
— Designed the first dual published content site at AOL Greenhouse (AOL's proprietary and web CMS publishing platforms). Both sites launched three months after project began, receiving numerous awards.
— Created custom illustrations, artwork and graphical interface designs for more than 50 Electra specials, including: Avon Race for the Cure, "Merry Swing-mas", "Mama-Rama", Women's History Month, Violence Against Women,"Love Thy Self", You-Go-Girl-Gram and more.

EDUCATION
— BFA (Bachelor of Fine Arts) — Southern Illinois University : Edwardsville, IL — 1987 GPA — 4.3/5.0
— Completed coursework in fine arts with major concentration on Drawing & Illustration. Minor in Printing, Painting, Sculpture, and English.
— 45 additional semester hours in Communication Design — 1990 -1992 GPA — 3.89/4.0

AWARDS
Who's Who in American College Students — 1987
Talent Grant in the Area of Art — 1984
Award Winner - Student Show — 1983
Foundation Scholarship Recipient — 1982

REFERRALS
Michele Nylander — Usability Product Manager - CallMiner, Inc.
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